Multinational Experiment 5 (MNE 5) Report of Synthesized Findings

Final MNE 5 Product

		Form Approved *OMB No. 0704-0188*
Report Documentation Page		

Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to a penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.

1. REPORT DATE **30 JUN 2008**	2. REPORT TYPE **Final**	3. DATES COVERED **-**

4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE **Multinational Experiment 5 (MNE 5) Report of Synthesized Findings**	5a. CONTRACT NUMBER
	5b. GRANT NUMBER
	5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER
6. AUTHOR(S) **William Laing, Auvo Viita-aho, Mathias Peters, Matthieu Douillet, Scott Burch, Christopher Singalwitch, Karsten Friis, Juan Diaz, Git Roxstrom, Håkan Petersson, Andrew Preece, Anne Kovacs, Martin Paulaitis, William Armstrong**	5d. PROJECT NUMBER
	5e. TASK NUMBER
	5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) **USJFCOM J9 Joint Concept Development and Experimentation, Suffolk, VA**	8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)	10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)
	11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)

12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT **Approved for public release, distribution unlimited**

13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES **The original document contains color images.**

14. ABSTRACT **MNE 5 was a two and a half year campaign that focused on developing a better understanding of the dynamics of a Comprehensive Approach in which civilian governmental agencies, military staffs and international governmental and non-governmental organizations undertake planning activities in a collaborative manner to achieve greater harmonization in crisis management.**

15. SUBJECT TERMS **multinational, experiment, MNE, comprehensive approach, strategic planning, operational planning, management, evaluation, assessment, information sharing, knowledge development, information strategy, information operations, logistics, effects-based**

16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT **unclassified**	b. ABSTRACT **unclassified**	c. THIS PAGE **unclassified**	**UU**	**28**	

Standard Form 298 (Rev. 8-98)
Prescribed by ANSI Std Z39-18

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Body

MNE 5 was a two and a half year campaign that focused on developing a better understanding of the dynamics of a Comprehensive Approach in which civilian governmental agencies, military staffs and international governmental and non-governmental organizations undertake planning activities in a collaborative manner to achieve greater harmonization in crisis management. It explored new concepts and capabilities that were multinational from the start and designed to assist in the development of the Comprehensive Approach. Some of the key findings are described below.

Focus of the Coalition: The ultimate focus of coalition intervention in stabilization operations should be on developing, supporting and sustaining legitimate, indigenous governance through the use of all available instruments of power. This is accomplished in great part by ensuring rule of law and social well being capacities are firmly established.

Strategic Guidance: Shared strategic guidance is needed early to clearly convey the coalition's focus and intent. It also is necessary to establish coherence and ensure the appropriate resources and authorities are delegated to leaders in theater.

Dialogue: Active dialogue among civilian and military organizations within and external to the coalition, and at all levels of activity, is important to sharing perspectives as well as information pertinent to resolving a crisis. This expands the coalition's scope of awareness, sharpens its situational discernment, and facilitates cooperation among the actors.

Understanding Differences: Differences in motives, objectives, perspectives and cultures between the varieties of actors involved must be understood and accounted for. This understanding contributes to flexibility in thinking, adaptability in planning and compromise in developing objectives, which are essential elements of a successful Comprehensive Approach.

Cooperative Relationships: Collaboration conducted among the voluntary participants that are both internal and external to the coalition should be based on cooperative relationships rather than on command relationships alone. However, moving toward cooperative relationships implies a willingness to move away from more direct command and control, which makes authority, responsibility and accountability for execution more challenging.

Shared Assessments: The process of developing national situational assessments and then sharing them with partners is useful to improve communication and shared understanding. However, the best way to undertake this process should be further explored. It appears more beneficial to share national assessments and keep differing perspectives in view rather than develop a single common coalition assessment which would reflect the lowest common denominator among partners and be more time consuming and expensive to produce.

Complementary Approaches: Complementary approaches to analysis, planning, management and evaluation across organizations are needed to achieve coherence. Pursuit of a single approach is not desired, as it will alienate some organizations and likely generate a process that seeks the lowest common denominator and lacks the richness that is available in the unique approaches by the different agencies.

Measuring Results: Civilians and the military face a common challenge in measuring results on the ground and evaluating progress toward achieving overall goals. Many organizations are able to measure their own project-level activities; however adequate methods have not been implemented to evaluate the mission-wide impact of collective efforts. Ultimately, coalition leadership must be able to determine if coalition efforts are contributing to achieving the strategic objectives.

Situational Understanding: Situational understanding in a complex, multi-faceted environment can be improved by a continuous systemic analysis as provided in MNE 5 by the Knowledge Development Concept.

Information Strategy: A Coalition Information Strategy Concept designed to meet the challenges of today's information environment was developed for experimentation in MNE 5. During the major integrating events, however, this concept was not fully applied as intended and therefore could not be assessed to the extent desired. However, experiment findings confirmed the major propositions of this new conceptual approach to coordinated multinational information activities.

Supplementary Thoughts

Additionally, informal discussions among the synthesis team members germinated supplementary thoughts that have bearing on understanding the Comprehensive Approach. Some of these more important ideas include the following:

Sharing Information in an Open Network: An underlying assumption is that an open information sharing network is likely to be successful if the participating members perceive the likelihood of accruing common benefits. One can infer that the benefits derived from sharing information in an open network would naturally encourage broader participation with the potential for even greater value to the members. However, broadly speaking, nations' policies do not encourage individuals to take risks in information sharing even if the potential benefit may seem obvious.

Types of Actors: Actors involved in contemporary crises can be categorized by groups that identify the nature of their activity: for example security, governance, economic development, and humanitarian. Comprehensive Approach is about the first three groups who work on neutralizing drivers of conflict, whereas humanitarian actors work in the midst of those drivers of conflict.

Leadership: A Comprehensive Approach presupposes an interest in engaging with one another, and in this regard facilitative leadership is a critical factor in achieving practicable solutions. For example, a leader must balance the needs of various independencies and interdependencies as

well as moderate the potentially overbearing influence of individual actors contributing greater resources and manpower.

Whole of Government Approach: The intent of a Whole of Government Approach (WGA) is to harmonize national interagency efforts, whereas the intent of a Comprehensive Approach is to harmonize multinational interagency efforts. The individual efforts of national WGAs combined do not necessarily imply improved multinational interagency coordination. National WGAs must coordinate their efforts externally as well as internally to achieve an effective Comprehensive Approach.

Measuring Results: Caution must be taken in applying causality between actions taken and results on the ground. Determining such links requires, at a minimum, a thorough methodology and huge amounts of data, which often are not available in a crisis-management environment. Moreover, evaluation as a process must not be considered overly "scientific." Common sense, subjective evaluations and an awareness of popular sentiments in the indigenous population may prove just as important.

Bridging Cultural Barriers: Creating a culture of trust and knowledge among potential Comprehensive Approach actors before deployment to the field can bridge many cultural barriers and false presumptions.

Local Ownership: The involvement and gradual increase of the legitimate indigenous authority in all aspects of a stability operation is necessary for a Comprehensive Approach to succeed.

The Way Ahead

Lastly, the report suggests in The Way Ahead further experimentation should be conducted in some important areas of Comprehensive Approach. They include the following:
- Cooperation of actors within the security sector
- Conduct of cooperative evaluations
- Technical solutions for information sharing
- Aspects of a comprehensive information strategy

INTRODUCTION

A multinational synthesis team participated in MNE 5 as an adjunct organization tasked with developing high level findings regarding the Comprehensive Approach. These findings were derived in part from information obtained from various sources outside the multinational experimentation (MNE) community. However, the majority of the findings are based on the synthesis of analysts' observations and data collected from surveys and interviews during events over the last two and a half years within the MNE 5 campaign. Of particular note, findings developed through the April 2008 Major Integrating Event were presented at the Comprehensive Approach Seminar hosted by the government of Finland on 17 June, 2008 to elicit discussion among ranking members of the international community.

It is hoped that members of the international community devoted to furthering the current understanding of the Comprehensive Approach will find the content of this report helpful in their work.

BACKGROUND

Experimentation

A brief explanation of the role and importance of experimentation is necessary to understand the nature of the work undertaken by the multinational community, as well as the context in which high level synthesized findings were developed.

Over the past seven years, the multinational experimentation venue has provided a unique opportunity for participating nations and organizations to explore new concepts and capabilities that are of mutual interest to the multinational community. The MNE community has been able to evaluate these concepts and capabilities in a controlled environment through experimentation (rather than in exercises that are designed to train or test people in current practices) without risking lives or operational success in an actual crisis. Experiments allow the nations to test, adjust and iterate until the best solution is found. Additionally, multinational experimentation provides a process for developing and evaluating concepts that are multinational and multi-organizational in nature from the very beginning while leveraging the expertise and contributions of all the participants. Experimentation within the MNE campaign has been a credible and cost effective method for identifying solutions to problems that the nations of the MNE community hold in common.

MNE Campaign

The multinational experiment process began in 2001 with Multinational Limited Objective Experiment 1 investigating the capability of an experimental combined joint task force to conduct collaborative military planning in a technically distributed environment. Multinational Limited Objective Experiment 2, conducted in 2003, studied the many factors that impact the ability of nations to share the types of information that are vital to coalition military planning. In 2004, the multinational experiment community conducted Multinational Experiment 3, which examined the issues associated with effects-based planning. The results determined that stability operations are inherently multinational and involve all elements of national power.

The follow on experiment, Multinational Experiment 4 (MNE 4), conducted in 2006 explored how a coalition would carry out its effects-based military plans in coordination with the advice and perspectives provided by a very rudimentary multinational interagency coordination group. This was the first significant attempt in the multinational experimentation series to expand the scope, or comprehensiveness, of actors involved in coalition operations. A number of important lessons that were learned in MNE 4 significantly changed the focus of follow on experimentation in MNE 5, which focused for the first time on the Comprehensive Approach by examining a methodology for multinational interagency planning when conducting stabilization and reconstruction operations in a coalition setting.

TRANSITION TO COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH

MNE 4 Findings

The results of MNE 4 and its follow on Senior Leader Seminar highlighted a number of important insights that became the driving force for a new direction in the subsequent phase of multinational experimentation. For example, MNE 4 revealed that the expertise of civilian actors could be leveraged best by developing a framework to bring civil and military actors together "high and early" in the planning process. Such a framework would facilitate the development of a shared understanding of a crisis situation and reduce the ad hoc nature of multinational planning. It naturally followed that establishing a clear understanding and acceptance of strategic objectives and a transition point within the coalition would allow more coordinated actions to be undertaken at all levels within a common strategy. This requires structures and methodologies to facilitate cooperative civilian and military planning, implementation, and evaluation. An implicit assumption was that coalition actors and supporting organizations required situational awareness, which could be improved through Continuous Systems Analysis. Additionally, the results of MNE 4 emphasized the importance of a coherent information strategy and information operations in shaping both global and local perceptions. Information operations should present a timely, coherent message, which is critical in gaining public support. And lastly, it was recognized that developing a correct, timely assessment of progress made toward achieving strategic objectives is important for coalition leaders to confirm or adjust the strategic direction of the coalition.

It was apparent to the NATO Military and Permanent Representatives as well as other dignitaries participating in the MNE 4 Senior Leader Seminar that these emerging thoughts were interdependent and could be better and more appropriately examined within a conceptual framework called Comprehensive Approach. This overarching idea prompted the MNE community to continue its concept and capability development in a new and meaningful context.

Comprehensive Approach

The 21st Century world has become increasingly interdependent. International crises are frequently brought about by intra- or inter-state conflict, failed or failing states, transnational crime organizations and terrorism, and natural causes such as drought or famine. Concurrently, crisis management operations have evolved from traditional peacekeeping to include peace enforcement and maintenance, "nation building", and large-scale civil-military operations. Additionally, the number of different crisis management actors has dramatically increased and includes governments, international organizations, private companies and non-governmental organizations representing a variety of different sectors (security, governance, economic development, humanitarian, etc.) frequently with divergent mandates, missions, agendas, and different resources. This complex environment is further compounded today by an increased quantity of actors involved in the conflict enabled by ever increasing improvements in international travel and communications. All these factors pose challenges of daunting magnitude.

In light of these issues, the goal of the Comprehensive Approach is to achieve greater harmonization among all appropriate actors in the analysis, planning, management, and evaluation of interventions in complex contingencies and emergencies. In support of this goal, a wide scope of coordinated and collaborative actions may be undertaken between organizations from pre-crisis consultations to post-conflict reconstruction and through the transition of responsibility to local authorities.

Comprehensive Approach Challenges

Extensive research of various documents that included lessons learned from the real world environment identified a set of challenges related to a Comprehensive Approach. Those challenges are briefly described in the discussion below.

First, it is difficult to craft agreed and achievable guidance at the strategic level for all government actors in a coalition environment. This statement implies processes and structures are needed to facilitate reaching consensus on the coalition's objectives and transition point.

Second, in a multinational context an agreed approach is required for determining when it is necessary to conduct an intervention. Also, methods are needed for developing approaches for transitioning into and out of complex exigencies. Embedded in these considerations is a challenge to account for the needs and capacities of indigenous entities within the area of interest.

Third, government, non-government, and various organizations need compatible approaches to ensure unity of effort in planning, managing, and evaluating interventions. Implicit in this requirement is the need to improve interagency coordination and to better understand inter-organizational cultures and practices. Also, it is acknowledged that evaluation or assessment of progress toward goals is multi-faceted. Organizations need to develop sufficient methods to evaluate the impact of their actions. This deficiency contributes to the difficulty in achieving the more complex multi-organization assessment, which is essential to determine overall impact and subsequent effective iterative planning.

Fourth, nations, organizations, and agencies require policies, processes and technologies that will enable sufficient sharing of information to support conducting a Comprehensive Approach. Some issues embedded in this challenge include impacts on member security postures, determination of members to be included in the information sharing family, and the technical capabilities that will be required to establish a collaborative environment across interagency and multinational organizations to support harmonization in the assessment, planning, management, and evaluation of operations.

Fifth, nations, organizations, and agencies require methodologies that will support synergistic collaboration to help create a shared understanding of the crisis environment. Foremost in this capability shortfall is the need to collect, store, process, and disseminate current, comprehensive knowledge for coordinated civil and military actions. These issues are closely aligned with the shortfalls addressing information sharing.

Lastly, nations require policies and processes that enable information operations as well as cross-governmental and organizational strategies that communicate the proper perception of the intent and purpose of the coalition's intervention. This requirement pervades the entire domain of civil-military efforts from pre-crisis consultations to post-conflict reconstruction.

MNE 5 was designed to examine these challenges through the lens of a problem statement in a series of events over a two and a half year period.

MNE 5

Experiment Participants

The following MNE 5 participants comprised the multinational membership that was engaged in the planning and execution of MNE 5 activities: Australia, Austria, Canada, Denmark, France, Finland, Germany, NATO, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, and United States. Some members had primary responsibility for concept development in a specific Focus Area as will be shown below.

Problem Statement

To provide general direction for experiment planning, MNE 5 developed a problem statement that circumscribed the heart of the Comprehensive Approach by postulating, "Coalition partners require improved methods to conduct rapid interagency and multinational planning, coordination, and execution in order to create and carry out a unified comprehensive strategy."

Scenario

The scenario in which the problem statement was examined was set in an area of the world that required the full range of civilian-led interagency efforts to create a secure, politically stable and economically sound environment. The scenario utilized a highly pathogenic avian influenza outbreak to provide the catalyst for significant refugee movement, a growing insurgency with cross border ramifications and an economic down spiral to precipitate a rapid destabilization of the region. Background conditions included deteriorating civil governance and economic institutions, human rights abuses, breakdown in rule of law, endemic corruption, and humanitarian assistance issues. The scenario also included challenges in the regional information environment meant to stress the capabilities of the coalition to convey its information strategy.

Campaign

The MNE 5 experimentation campaign consisted of a series of interdependent events that built upon one another to examine different aspects of the problem statement. These events were conducted at various locations in participant countries during a two and one half year effort and were instrumental in maturing concept understanding in the focus areas that each of the partners had been pursuing – some of their work in fact was initiated prior to MNE 4. Focus areas were used to examine thematically the overarching problem statement and associated challenge statements. Shown below are each focus area and the MNE 5 participant having the lead of a multinational team responsible for its development. For purposes of experimentation, the first three focus areas were designated as principal focus areas, and the others were designated as enabling focus areas. The difference in the two designations does not reflect a difference in level of effort or importance; rather it reflects the nature of the interrelationships that exist among the concepts.

- Multinational Interagency Strategic Planning – France

- Cooperative Implementation Planning – United Kingdom
- Cooperative Implementation Management and Evaluation – United States
- Shared Information Framework and Technology – Finland
- Information Exchange Architecture and Technology – Sweden
- Knowledge Development – Germany
- Coalition Information Strategy / Information Operations – Germany
- Multinational Logistics – United States
- Effects-Based Approach to Multinational Operations and Assessment – NATO

Annex A of this report provides an overview of each focus area's concept and the associated product that enables its application when implementing a Comprehensive Approach.

The work that was achieved through numerous workshops and small experiments with narrowly defined objectives was later integrated and examined within the broader scope of a Comprehensive Approach during the February, April and December 2008 Major Integrating Events (MIE). Briefly, the February MIE evaluated a possible framework for high level dialogue to enable coalition partners to develop a comprehensive strategy in response to an emerging crisis. Using these results, the April MIE examined the factors and conditions which best enable effective dialogue among planning partners from varied backgrounds and organizations at the operational or in-country level to further develop and implement the coalition strategy. Lastly, the December MIE focused on technology and procedures that enable cooperative sharing of information and better situational understanding through knowledge development.

MNE 5 SYNTHESIZED FINDINGS RELATED TO PLANNING A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH

General Perceptions

The MNE 5 campaign investigated a number of complex planning aspects involved in implementing a Comprehensive Approach by examining them through the lenses of the principal and enabling concepts and the set of Comprehensive Approach challenges. However, during experimentation activity the synthesis team noted that although some activities were not targets of analytical scrutiny, they in fact raised implicit issues having broad application to a Comprehensive Approach. Consequently, the team members discussed these issues and believe the insights they derived were important to include in this report. They are discussed briefly here in order to provide a broader context for the discussion of the analytically based, synthesized findings that will be addressed later.

Central to Comprehensive Approach planning is the requirement to identify stakeholders with interests at play in the crisis environment. In MNE 5, the national governments and NATO that comprised the coalition under the authority of a commonly accepted mandate were among those key stakeholders. While observing the activities of the experiment, it became clear that each nation's government is obligated to identify the right people for purposes of drafting a coalition's strategic and implementation plans. These plans should focus initially on developing rule of law and social well being capacities through the use of all available instruments of power while keeping in mind the ultimate goal of developing and sustaining indigenous governance and institutions. This is an important point, and in this regard there are two significant considerations.

First, the seniority of individuals assigned to planning functions must be commensurate with the type and level of decisions they will be expected to make. This concern applies to individuals selected to participate at the highest level of strategic planning as well as to those assigned to the lower levels involved with the in-country and field levels of planning. By happenstance, some national representatives seated in the Interagency Implementation Forum during the April Major Integrating Event were too senior in their nation's government to effectively engage in the detailed planning activities that were conducted at this intermediate level.

Second, the subject matter qualifications of individuals also must be commensurate with the type and level of decisions they will be expected to make. That is, they must be knowledgeable of both the situation and the national interests that they represent. In reality, individuals having in depth knowledge across a broad spectrum of topics and issues are difficult to identify, not to mention spare from the critical duties of government. Consequently, this requirement adds a significant measure of difficulty to building a qualified planning team. In order to keep the size of a planning group at numbers that are manageable, for the most part the individuals comprising it must possess both requisite authority and subject matter expertise. This may be a very hard requirement to fulfill.

The above discussion pertains to those individuals who are national representatives working within and for the coalition in developing a Comprehensive Approach. But, in MNE 5 it was

realized that implementing a Comprehensive Approach will encompass many other entities that are external to the coalition itself and that don't have binding agreements with the coalition. For example, during a crisis there is usually a host of international, non-governmental, and private sector organizations that are actively pursuing vital interests in the crisis area. Many were present well before the coalition was formed. Their activities may be compatible with, detached from, or contrary to those of the coalition. Regardless, in crafting an effective response the coalition must understand the interests and objectives of these other actors whose activities contribute to a dynamic environment. Therefore, it is highly desirable that these non-coalition representatives are invited to share their perspectives and provided the opportunity to develop mutually beneficial relationships with the coalition and each other.

It became apparent that identifying the right people to collaborate in planning and implementing a Comprehensive Approach is a very difficult task. However, likely more difficult will be creating a methodology that can facilitate coordination of the different missions and timelines that inherently characterize a diverse group of interested parties. Lastly, added complexity is introduced when attempting to reconcile to the extent possible the cultural differences in language, values, behavior, and institutions – to name a few – that the various actors bring to the table.

Managing a process designed to identify and maximize results that are mutually beneficial to the coalition and contributing actors is an ambitious undertaking. It must bring together the right people representing diverse entities at compatible levels of authority and influence.

This discussion has set the stage for the next sections, which highlight key findings that emerged from the synthesis of observations that were recorded by the analysts during the experiment.

Understanding at the Strategic Level of Planning

It is useful for coalition partners to develop a thorough national assessment of the situation and then share their perspectives among coalition members before deciding how to participate in the resolution of a crisis. This assessment would include identification and understanding of root causes of the crisis, its dynamics, the interests of the main actors and stakeholders and various other issues. However, significant differences in situational analyses as well as discrete national interests within the coalition may affect the ability for the coalition to arrive at a common assessment. Although a common assessment might be desired among the coalition partners, differences between national assessments are natural and should be expected. In view of this, the partner nations should encourage open and objective discussion of these differences in order to raise everyone's awareness to the level that will facilitate adoption of a coalition strategy that can be universally supported. Moreover, by trying to build on areas of convergence and by understanding possible subjects of divergence in advance, it should be possible to create a stronger, more cohesive coalition.

Identifying and understanding the actors, the personal, social and organizational networks, and the various relationships that have been and currently are active in the crisis area will have significant influence on the nature of the coalition's response. They provide historical context as well as awareness of the dynamic forces that are continuously influencing the conflict and

shaping the environment. Additionally, they are prerequisites for building crucial, viable collaborative activities at the lower echelons of planning and implementation.

The precepts above were recognized by the French MNE 5 team when they took responsibility for the Multinational Interagency Strategic Planning (MNISP) Concept focus area and for developing the Strategic Planning Guide, which was written for the use of coalition strategic planners in developing a coalition comprehensive strategy. This guide is intended to facilitate the development of a Comprehensive Approach at the highest level when planning a multinational response to a crisis or conflict. It offers a framework for high level strategy development when a coalition engages in crisis or conflict resolution based on the following building blocks: analysis and assessment of the situation; development of a long term vision, the medium term goals of the intervention and the strategic objectives leading to them; and initial considerations for achieving and assessing progress toward the identified transition point.

Understanding at the Operational / In-Country Level of Planning

One of the basic premises of a Comprehensive Approach is that a coalition will greatly increase its ability to achieve its desired outcomes by taking into account the intent and specific activities of other actors working in the same complex environment. A typical crisis in today's world involves a large number of actors that have different perspectives on associated problems and solutions. Often, many may have long-standing relationships (bilateral and multilateral) and tacit agreements between individual coalition partner nations and other actors in the crisis region. The coalition has to be willing to expend the effort necessary to grasp the underlying reasons or motivations for those relationships and their associated activities in order to enrich its situational awareness and understanding.

Comprehending the cultural, organizational and functional diversities that motivate the relationships and activities of various actors is a challenge that pervades all phases of a Comprehensive Approach. Generally speaking, this is not an easy task because of inherent cultural and institutional biases. The task requires acumen, highly developed communication skills, commitment and innate abilities to cultivate an atmosphere of mutual trust and confidence among collaborative participants. However, once these diversities are understood, the coalition can better define which actors have common objectives with the coalition and assess their potential as beneficial collaborators. Points of common interest will facilitate dialog, thereby opening opportunities to establish enduring, synergistic relationships.

A crisis environment, especially one steeped in security, governance, economic development and humanitarian issues is continuously subject to change. Tenuous relations and understandings may mutate within this fluid milieu. Consequently, attempts to create and maintain multiple cooperative relationships that support the coalition's cause can be very challenging. As in all cases of constructive human interaction, cultivating compatible and mutually supportive relationships is a continuous process and requires willingness to compromise when appropriate in order to achieve the higher goal.

A coalition likely will encounter actors in the region who are not interested in developing cooperative relationships because they either have diametrical missions or strong desires to

maintain a neutral stance and organizational independence. They may or may not have similar interests or strategic visions with the coalition. In these cases it is highly desirable at least to maintain open communication with these actors and to deconflict activities in the region as much as practical.

Lastly, it should be understood that while it's important for the coalition to share perspectives and information with actors external to the coalition, there is no requirement for a coalition to develop a shared plan with those same actors even if they have similar outlooks or goals. To do so would be cumbersome and time consuming and tie the coalition to a plan that could severely limit its freedom to adapt to the changing environment. However, the coalition should nurture existing relations in order to achieve the maximum compatibility and mutual support that can be created within a scenario of multifaceted interests.

Organizing for Flexibility in Planning

Generally speaking, as the number of national partners and other actors joining the coalition increases, so the level of organizational agility of the coalition as a whole tends to decrease. The potential implications of this observation should be determining factors in the design of a comprehensive response.

A common approach to problem-solving, often adopted by the military, is to decompose a complicated problem into distinct and seemingly more manageable elements. In MNE 5, this type of approach was used in the form of a layered hierarchy of planning activity that civilian coalition planners found confusing and difficult to support. This type of structured approach is likely to be ineffective for dealing with complex situations. Alternate planning methods should be identified and adopted for use in a Comprehensive Approach.

The inclusion of many different government actors within the coalition provides access to a broad range of contributions that can help achieve the strategic vision. This requires organizational mechanisms (structures and processes) that will expand the classical horizontal and vertical paths of communication and encourage individual actions to be taken by in-country stakeholders. It must be kept in mind that collaborating with a vast number of actors, while highly desirable, may become unmanageable or impractical considering the amount of time and resources required to support it. Additionally, collaborative meetings with large gatherings may not be productive as actors will have to compete for opportunities to participate and express their opinion.

These issues pose a new paradigm concerning how to mentally approach cooperative planning and how to design organizations and processes that allow adaptive implementation. Consistent with this new mindset, it is believed planning structures and methodologies should be developed to provide both organizational and individual latitude to expand the traditional horizontal and vertical constraints that hitherto have stifled agility. Planning functions should be able to merge traditional top-down approaches favored by coalitions with the more fragmented and autonomous planning approaches used by organizations in the field. Based on these organizational changes, a corollary is that leaders should be trained in the skills needed to

develop flexible relationships with other actors in the field and should be sanctioned to pursue those relationships within the intent of overarching objectives.

Changes to planning methodology and training that are consistent with this paradigm shift will facilitate a more effective implementation of a Comprehensive Approach.

Facilitating Open Dialogue in Planning

One of the most significant findings from MNE 5 concerns the importance of creating mechanisms that promote unencumbered dialog among nations within the coalition as well as among diverse participants outside the coalition. As noted earlier, the Comprehensive Approach involves more than the national entities that are internal to the coalition. Indeed, it includes consideration of as many different objectives and perspectives of external actors as is practical in developing the coalition's objectives. This expands the coalition's scope of awareness and sharpens its situational discernment. It also sets the conditions for establishing relationships that can be advantageous to coalition activity in predictable as well as unforeseen ways.

During the February 2008 Major Integrating Event, a Strategic Forum was established consisting of persons directly involved in the strategic planning process. In accordance with the MNISP concept, these individuals represent national interests of the coalition governments and are tasked to facilitate coherence between coalition governments and other concerned actors. The important feature of the Forum is that it is a venue designed to convene actors interested or engaged in the crisis area and to provide both a structure and a methodology by which participants can share information and high level perspectives of problems and solutions. During the experiment, the members of the Strategic Forum collaborated within this environment and developed a Coalition Comprehensive Strategy. Dialogue, in part facilitated by people in leadership positions, contributed to the exchange of concerns and ideas leading to both a consensus within the coalition and cooperative relationships with actors external to the coalition polity.

The Major Integrating Experiment in April 2008 applied the work accomplished in February by the Strategic Forum participants to the operational or implementation level of Comprehensive Approach planning. Concept Development Teams led by the United Kingdom and United States developed several organizational formats and procedural methodologies, described in the Cooperative Implementation Planning, Management, and Evaluation Concept, for the express purpose of fostering dialog. At this level of planning, a typical crisis likely will have sundry stakeholders wanting to impose their will upon the outcome. From the view of the coalition, this can create potential chaos and become a severe impediment to achieving an acceptable transition point. Rather than ignore or stifle the efforts of these actors, it is more sensible to invite them into a benign environment to discuss the collective differences and likenesses that exist among them. In the experiment, facilitated dialogue among the multinational interagency planners achieved, to an acceptable extent, an understanding of how activities occurring in the crisis area could be synchronized or at least deconflicted.

It was noted that the organizational format and procedural methodology used in the experiment exhibited utility. However, an initial assumption was substantiated – that regardless of the

structure or procedure used, open dialogue guided by skillful facilitation and leadership can develop conciliatory and mutually beneficial relationships among heterogeneous actors. Furthermore, the experiment showed that the role of facilitator is not neutral. In addition to being knowledgeable about facilitation techniques in order to manage the dialogue among a variety of actors, the person fulfilling this facilitation role must be able to identify with various points of view, be able to speak on behalf of others, and have some expertise regarding the country or region of interest

During the experiment, there were other roles that supported effective group planning. The scribe for example was in charge of developing the written implementation plan based on the discussions among actors. This suggests that in order to better facilitate dialogue within a Comprehensive Approach, it would be useful to have pre-identified and trained people who could potentially become members of this core staff.

Developing and Implementing an Information Strategy

Information and the means by which it is exchanged shape the information environment in today's highly technological world. A coalition cannot be successful in solving a crisis unless it is successful in the information environment. Recognizing that opponents are also operating in the information environment, it is vitally important that the coalition send consistent messages – by words and deeds – to all parties involved in the crisis in order to promote its intentions and the purpose of its actions. Therefore an information strategy must comprise more than just media relations; it must determine key themes and messages for consistent delivery by appropriate means throughout the coalition. During MNE 5, an additional staff function of an Information Advisor was created to advise and coordinate these efforts. Unfortunately, this position could not be fully implemented in the major integrating events as proposed by the Information Strategy concept. Its scope of responsibility was reduced to that of a Media Advisor for the Interagency Implementation Forum with its main task of preparing its representatives for various media appearances. In particular during effects development the Information Advisor's assistance was frequently sought, and the idea that all activity could possibly create information effects was broadly acknowledged. Additionally, different approaches used by civil and military actors concerning information activities constitute a major challenge for consistent messaging in a Comprehensive Approach context.

Planning for Assessment

Determining progress in an intervention is critical to assessing whether an intervention has achieved part or all of its goals, deciding how to adjust to better achieve those goals, and re-evaluating the relevancy and validity of underlying assumptions made in establishing those goals. Interventions in complex environments require a holistic approach, and the manner used to determine progress in a mission-wide context will, as a result, be complex and dynamic. This requires an understanding of diverse relationships and adapting to various elements of the changing environment. This begins early in the planning process by working in a collaborative way with a wide range of actors that contribute to a "joint evaluation" focused on outcomes. A joint evaluation is an evaluation in which different donor agencies or partners participate in order to determine the effectiveness of their activities collectively in achieving higher level outcomes.

An implicit contribution of assessment planning is that it helps planners at all levels develop plans that are more focused and outcome-oriented. Thus, planning for determining progress in an intervention must begin early and at the strategic level with coalition members developing, then sharing, their respective national conflict analyses. Using common evaluation criteria (e.g. Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development -- Development Assistance Committee criteria) as an aide, planners can develop a coalition comprehensive strategy that includes guidance for evaluating progress. The process of developing evaluation guidance at higher levels between coalition nations and other actors will assist individual contributing nations and organizations to develop in parallel their own evaluation indicators. Guidance must be developed in a manner that provides sufficient detail for lower level planning to be effective, but also allow enough latitude for that planning to be adaptive.

As part of establishing guidance for determining progress, it is important to include indicators that assess underlying planning assumptions and objectives. These will aide decision-makers in determining whether plans remain relevant or need revision. If plans are revised, indicators for assessing those plans and underlying assumptions may also need revision.

Indicators provide a means to gain insight into progress towards achieving planned objectives – though they can be different for different organizations and at different levels of activity. Organizations have historically been good at measuring specific activities, but less effective at determining impact and overall progress as a result of those activities, particularly when there is a slow dynamic between action and the desired results. Selecting appropriate indicators to determine progress towards achieving strategic objectives should be a more comprehensive effort to which many partner organizations make a contribution.

It is important for personnel who conduct evaluations to be flexible and responsive to the decision-makers in order to provide useful feedback. This will help enable decision-makers to revise their plans or implement a different approach if necessary. This may require measuring indicators outside the immediate activity that extend into a greater portion of the conflict environment. It also requires the ability of the coalition to adapt to changes in operational approaches and revised plans. However, decision-makers should be cautious to not overwhelm those in the field with evaluation requirements that adversely detract from accomplishing the mission.

The overall impact of an intervention cannot be determined by adding together the discrete outputs of individual efforts at the project or program level. In a Comprehensive Approach context, focus should be on conducting evaluation processes collectively with a focus on mission-wide outcomes and impact. These efforts will ultimately support the senior leadership who will need to rely on judgment in viewing these evaluations within the larger context. Determining progress can become sterile when applied as a hard core science alone.

Though civilian and military monitoring and evaluation philosophies have the potential to be compatible, harmonizing the contributions of these processes across many organizations must begin with establishing open and cooperative relationships. Cooperative relationships will enable partners to transcend differences in perceptions, interests, and goals as well as differences in

existing monitoring and evaluation methodologies. Creating the motivation for many organizations and actors to cooperate will be difficult since it will require added resources; however, it is important to examine the benefits rather than simply the costs of working together.

Enabling Capabilities

It's appropriate to explain the capabilities that three MNE 5 concepts provide that enable the continuum of cooperative planning, implementation and evaluation activities within the Comprehensive Approach. They are Knowledge Development (KD), Shared Information Framework and Technology (SHIFT), and Information Exchange Architecture and Technology (IEAT). A brief discussion of their relevance follows.

The Knowledge Development Framework Concept describes integrated methods, processes, structures, and technologies to enable military and civilian partners to gain and maintain situational awareness and comprehensive understanding of the operational environment in a multinational and interagency context. A repository of current knowledge created through a process of continuous systemic analysis of information from diverse, multinational sources provides a powerful capability for grasping the complexity of multi-faceted crises. A KD like approach could be beneficial to nations in developing their own national assessments, and it could prove beneficial to a forming coalition in developing shared assessments and views among partners. Additionally, KD capabilities can also be used to bring together various multinational sources and analyses and facilitate the coalition's planning efforts. Clearly, KD's utility is just as, if not more important at the operational or in-country level activities of planning, implementation and evaluation.

The SHIFT Concept provides an approach that promotes the use of a common and neutral information sharing platform where information is provided by various multinational actors desiring to participate in a broad information sharing community. Information that resides in the SHIFT database is vetted for reliability and utility by the users, not by any leading organization. SHIFT introduces general processes for members of communities of interest to achieve appropriate levels of coordination in their planning activities. A vibrant network of information exchange and collaboration among participants internal and external to the coalition allows access to other actors and information of various types that hitherto had not been readily available. Obviously, knowledge development is enhanced by the ability to retrieve information from a wider, trusted information sharing community.

Hand in glove with the attributes of the SHIFT concept are those of the IEAT concept. This concept builds upon the principle that information is an operation wide asset. It facilitates effective collaboration among participating actors with an architecture that allows partners to share information using their own existing systems. It provides guidelines that describe how exchange of information can be conducted by a federation of information technology systems using commercial off the shelf (COTS) service oriented architecture (SOA). In addition to being cost effective, this allows partners to utilize services that are resident within the federation of systems but are not inherent to one's own system capabilities. Another key principle of his concept relates to the need to respect the sovereignty of actors. Therefore, IEAT provides technical solutions that ensure information passed between coalition and SHIFT information

domains is not disclosed to unauthorized participants. This implies of course that IEAT is dependent on formal information exchange agreements being in place among the collaborative participants.

Unfortunately, information sharing systems and tools were not examined as enablers of the planning activities conducted in the February and April Major Integrating Events. However, for the most part the results of the December Major Integrating Event indicated the fundamental utility of the architectures, technologies and processes described by these two concepts for conducting Comprehensive Approach planning, implementation and evaluation.

SUPPLEMENTARY THOUGHTS

This section of the report addresses several issues that were discussed informally during gatherings of the synthesis team members. Their implications were not pursued with the same rigor as those that were presented earlier in this report either because of time constraints or because these issues were not directly observable within the context of the experiment. However, their inclusion may be of value in generating continued investigation of the Comprehensive Approach.

Before addressing these supplementary issues, however, it is worth noting some constraints that were intentionally imposed on the scope of investigation associated with the MNE 5 experiment.

MNE 5 Constraints

Firstly, MNE 5 presupposed a certain degree of national coherence among the various civil and military agencies in each of the participating nations in the coalition. This was needed both at the strategic level and at the in-theater level. In the real world, however, many countries have a way to go before they achieve a fully coherent national contribution to a multinational crisis management operation. While these are important discussions, MNE 5 focused on one level above this – that is, the international multi-agency level.

Secondly, MNE 5 was about a core group of actors (the coalition), their internal relations and to some extent their external relations to other actors in the field. It was not an attempt to plan for the entire crisis management operation in the theater, but rather for the portion that the coalition assumed to be its immediate concern and responsibility. The fact that the coalition perhaps would be the largest actor in the field may have made the plan look like a "grand plan" for the entire theater, but this would be erroneous. There always will be other actors who are not part of the coalition or other cooperative constellations of actors, including neutral humanitarian agencies and host nation authorities. These actors must be taken into account on every level of planning, but the coalition cannot plan on their behalf.

Thirdly, whereas the parallels and similarities are discernible, MNE 5 did not engage the ongoing efforts to develop a more coherent UN. MNE 5 was focused on the relationship *between* various states and agencies, and as such the UN was just one of several actors with whom the coalition interacted in its planning efforts. The "UN Integrated Mission" concept faces many of the same challenges as the multi-agency environment of MNE 5, but is nonetheless an effort to streamline *within* the UN organization.

Fourthly, the MNE 5 scenario had a relatively low level of security concerns. It was by and large a politically noncontroversial humanitarian response operation. Whereas this made the planning rather uncontroversial, it also left some potential real-world security related challenges untested. The military could plan for a more or less classic peacekeeping operation, with some elements of peace-enforcement towards pockets of criminals and rebels. From the military side, therefore, MNE 5 was an opportunity to address the crucial interaction with other actors in the field.

Supplementary issues worth further consideration are discussed in the sections below.

Sharing Information in an Open Network

An underlying assumption is that an information sharing network is likely to be successful if the participating members perceive the likelihood of accruing common benefits. In the commercial communication environment, this might be illustrated by a company sharing with its competitors the discovery of malicious software that has been injected into computer networks. Sharing this information can leverage shared troubleshooting ideas of many to resolve a problem for the greater good of the business community writ large. One can infer that the benefits derived from sharing information in an open network would naturally encourage broader participation with the potential for even greater value to the members. However, broadly speaking, nations' policies do not seem to encourage individuals to take risks in information sharing, even if the potential benefit may seem obvious.

One of the benefits of an open network is that the quality of the information that is made available is quickly assessed by the users of that information and is not dependent on any formal supervisory entity or organization. In other words, self-regulation employs a bottom up rather than a top down approach. The "eBay" rating system was mentioned as an example of how assessment might be conducted. Information that is found to be erroneous, misleading, or outright wrong reflects directly on the reliability of the provider. Communal judgment will draw adverse criticism and possibly lead to that provider's exclusion from the information network.

Additionally, employing a Wikipedia style repository of information on the open network may naturally encourage dynamic exchange of ideas and perspectives. This can result in development of broader individual understanding of the participating members as well as foster evolutionary development of "common" understanding among them.

Electronic social networking is important to the development of trust among individuals. This is a fundamental prerequisite for creating the kind of atmosphere that will foster the candid sharing of information and ideas in an open information sharing network.

Lastly, there are many information sharing tools that are technically capable and available. However, clear guidance and support is required to be able to use those services in common collaborative situations. A change of mindset from decision support or command and control systems to collaboration support systems is important when participating in a networked, multidisciplinary environment.

The Actors

It is worth defining the actors involved in the crisis. Which organizations can be expected to engage in a Comprehensive Approach? Roughly speaking, one may differentiate between four sets of actors in contemporary crises: security, governance, economic development and humanitarian. Personnel in the latter group are cautious about engaging with the three former groups, since their access and security are based on being perceived as impartial and independent from political influence. They work *in* the conflict and as such do not address conflict drivers but work to alleviate suffering; whereas the other three groups work *on* the conflict with the intent to

mitigate the drivers of conflict. In practice there are grey zones between development and humanitarian assistance, but once an activity is considered political or undertaken in support of the authorities (e.g. building of infrastructure, government clinics or public schools) it can no longer be deemed as humanitarian action.

Comprehensive Approach is, therefore, largely about the three former groups – security, governance and economic development. These are the actors from whom one can most likely expect enhanced coordination. When talking about civilian-military relations in the Comprehensive Approach context, one should recognize that there needs to be a distinction between humanitarian-military relations, and the relations between the military and other non-humanitarian civilian actors.

Motivations, Resources and Leadership

Organizations and countries that share the notion of working *on* a conflict may nonetheless have different mandates and motivations for doing so. A Comprehensive Approach presupposes an interest and motivation among the relevant parties to engage each other. Broadly speaking, there are both "pull" and "push" factors: some are a result of an interest in performing better through coordinating limited or scarce resources, whereas others result from the realization that missions will fail if efforts are not coordinated better. The consequences in terms of deteriorated security, humanitarian catastrophe, political costs and economical loss may be of enormous scale. Worth noting also is that as more actors work together, legitimacy – moral and political – will tend to increase. These motivating factors will have a direct impact upon the degree and level of cooperation each actor is willing to engage in. It will also impact the overall size of the engagement of each actor and the resources they are willing to commit.

Different sectors and different phases of a crisis are therefore likely to witness varying degree of coordination and commitment, depending on the motivation and mandate of the various organizations.

Furthermore, the relative size of the engagement is likely to have an impact on leadership roles. The Comprehensive Approach can not be based on a military command-like structure. It requires facilitative leadership that balances the need to respect the independence of the participating agencies, while at the same time managing their interdependencies. The larger actors in terms of resources and manpower are likely to have more influence. It is unrealistic to expect all agents to have an equal role in the coordination process, but the process should ensure that those voices representing a genuine constituency are heard.

Besides resources, legitimacy is a foundation for leadership. Host country authorities, if legitimate, should ideally provide such leadership. In situations with a weak or collapsed state, the senior UN representative or leaders of regional intergovernmental organizations may be the most credible actors to facilitate strategic or country-level Comprehensive Approach activities. This provides international legitimacy to the activity of the actors engaged in the field in terms of domestic and international law, regional treaties and humanitarian principles.

Comprehensive Approach is based largely upon voluntary cooperation. Those providing the greater share of resources and those who already have established relationships in the field are better positioned to facilitate the coordination effort in close cooperation with the legitimate representatives of local authorities and other partners and stakeholders.

Whole of Government Approach vis-à-vis Comprehensive Approach

A Whole of Government Approach (WGA) depicts efforts to harmonize national efforts, whereas Comprehensive Approach refers to international/interagency cooperation. A WGA can be a crucial tool in this regard, particularly for larger donors or countries which are engaged in many sectors simultaneously. But are these concepts necessarily compatible? Do the collective efforts of national WGAs imply improved international coordination and hence better results at the theater-level?

Not necessarily. Real-world experience from Afghanistan, for example, has shown that national WGAs that have individual responsibilities for different geographical areas, as through the regional PRT system, result in different regions receiving different kinds and amount of support depending on which ISAF-countries happen to be responsible for them.

Thus, the national WGAs need to coordinate their collective efforts to effectively contribute to an overall Comprehensive Approach.

Measuring Results

For a Comprehensive Approach to make sense, certain shared ideas about how progress would be defined and what the indicators of progress should look like, are necessary. MNE 5 did make some preliminary explorations into real-time mission wide evaluation, but more research and experimentation are needed. Whereas most real-time evaluations today take place within each organization engaged in a crisis management, improved efforts to share indicators, methodologies and results would be crucial for a Comprehensive Approach. Importantly though, as with planning, it is unrealistic to expect one large matrix covering all sectors in the theater. That is neither feasible nor desirable. Instead, mechanisms and routines for exchanging evaluations and assessments may be developed. Possibly indicators and methodologies between organizations may also be developed. Evaluations should consist of both quantitative and qualitative data, as at the end of the day it is the *perceptions* of progress in the indigenous population that will determine mission success. Output statistics, such as the number of schools built, are irrelevant if they are not interpreted correctly within the larger context of the mission.

Training and Bridging of Cultural Barriers

The relationships between the international actors and the indigenous authorities are sometimes strained and challenging in a crisis area. This can hardly be prepared or trained for as the situation differs from place to place. However, the various civilian and military communities and the various international organizations could do much better in the field if they had better knowledge of each other before deployment. This is one of the lessons from MNE 5 which is among the simplest to implement.

By simply bringing different organizations together to discuss approaches, methodologies and objectives, many cultural barriers and false presumptions may be bridged. Furthermore, joint exercises, training and experiments may prove fruitful.

As in the other MNE 5 findings, this is not about building an organizational structure for deployment, but about creating a culture of trust and knowledge upon which both civilian and military organization could become more flexible and better at sharing viewpoints and information at all stages of the operations.

Local Ownership

Common sense and experience affirms sustainable stability after a crisis can be only achieved by the indigenous population. The intervening powers are there to assist. Only by building the capacity of local organizations and authorities can an exit be achieved for the international community. Involvement of local actors may be a challenge right after a conflict, as this could for example reinforce and legitimize the power of a warlord not democratically elected. The balance between dealing with the de facto power structures on the ground and simultaneously strengthening or building up a legitimate authority has proven challenging in many theaters. Nevertheless, the involvement and gradual increase of the legitimate indigenous authority in all aspects of an operation is a necessity for a Comprehensive Approach to succeed.

THE WAY AHEAD

Improved coherence and cooperation among actors and agencies working to resolve the causes of a crisis (who work *on* a conflict) are feasible if one avoids attempts to force all actors into one organization, system or plan. Organizational independence will remain a factor even in a Comprehensive Approach. The key is rather to use every opportunity to try to inform and cooperate with other relevant actors in the field. Proactive liaison and organizational flexibility are among the main assets to achieve this, together with an open culture and increased knowledge about the other actors in the field. While measures in this direction can be implemented immediately, further investigation is still needed on certain other aspects of the Comprehensive Approach. For instance could the concrete cooperation within the security sector be explored further? The relationship between coalition armed forces and the international police, indigenous police, military forces, the courts and the prisons is of crucial importance for the stability and security of most crisis areas, but the cooperation does not always function too well. Furthermore, the topic of cooperative evaluations as discussed above is another aspect of a Comprehensive Approach where the potential for improvements is huge. The same applies, for example, to technical solutions for information sharing and a comprehensive information strategy.

A coalition formed to resolve any of the daunting challenges posed in today's crisis environments will likely have to move quickly without being encumbered by the requirement to generate new modus operandi. The Comprehensive Approach framework developed for MNE 5 was a seminal effort by the multinational experimentation community to address those challenges. However, continued refinement of the Comprehensive Approach guiding principles can spawn improved processes, organizations, and technologies that are urgently needed to support comprehensive, multinational activities. Ultimately, an established Comprehensive Approach that is agreed upon by multinational partners in advance will obviate the necessity to respond in an ad hoc manner as has been the practice so often in the past.